

## CHAPTER THREE:

# THE LAST TRUE REBELLION

FROM the day that God became flesh and was crucified until now, *the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force.*<sup>81</sup> The answer to the question “Why?” has been revealed, and now we must take the heavens by force, in faith, hope, and love. Now it is time for the last true rebellion.

We are no longer children of war, because we now know the way, the truth, and the life; and thus, within our hearts the war of man against God has come to an end. The only violence that is left is the determination of our will to die for the truth. Now the unseen war begins. This is the life-long struggle against the passions and vices within. It is a war against sin, with the aim of acquiring virtue. This unseen war begins and ends with the last true rebellion.

Detachment from this world is the door to the freedom of this rebellion, while the key that unlocks the door is asceticism. Asceticism is the practice of achieving virtue by spiritual and physical labor: fasting, prayer, vigilance, silence and deprivations. The labor is in depriving oneself of this temporary world and its pleasures, in order to acquire the eternal peace of the other world—heaven. It is this rebellion against the world that begins on the battlefield of our own hearts and in our own souls and bodies that is the only source of true freedom.

To understand the last true rebellion, we have to have an understanding of: the body and the soul, the senses, the passions, the virtues, prayer, and suffering. We will begin with the aspects that comprise human existence.

## *The Body and the Soul*<sup>82</sup>

There are two aspects to human life—that of the body and that of the soul. Both of these work together according to the person's will. The body is the means by which the soul expresses itself, while the soul is the means by which the body has life. So the detachment from this world must be with the body and with the soul if it is to be successful.

*The life of the body* consists of various organs, each of which carries out its function, which is necessary for the body's life. There are three major systems: the digestive system, the musculoskeletal system, and the nervous system. When these function correctly in relation to each other, the body is healthy and life is not endangered; but when the order is upset, the body becomes ill and life is endangered. This rule also applies to the soul.

*The life of the soul* consists of three parts: *the mind, the will, and the heart or spirit*. *The mind* comprises the mental life, a person's thoughts. As soon as something is perceived with the senses, the imagination and memory begin to work. Nothing can enter the soul without the imagination and the memory. If something is not stored in the memory, you will never be able to imagine it, let alone think about it. Thoughts are never born directly from the soul. Thus, thought itself comes out of the soul and operates according to the laws of the soul.

The second part of the soul, *the will*, is the greatest gift that God has given us. With this gift of freedom of will, we make the vital decision to believe in God or believe in Nothing. Just as the body can die and decompose, so also the soul can decompose. This happens when the free will desires to reject God. It was in this total freedom that mankind's shackles were created and in these chains mankind still claims freedom. This is why freedom is a perfect, yet fearful, gift.

The third part of the soul, *the heart*, is the core of one's being. It is also called the spirit, or the highest aspect of the

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soul. It is no accident that the spirit has also been given the name of heart, for this physical organ is also the core of the body. The heart or the spirit, as a force which has come from God, knows God, seeks God, and in Him alone finds rest. With a certain innermost spiritual feeling attesting to its coming from God, the spirit feels its complete dependence on Him and acknowledges itself as obliged to please God in everything and live only for Him and by Him.

More precise manifestations of these movements of the heart are: (1) *Fear of God*. All people, no matter what their degree of development, know that there is a supreme being, God, who created everything, and that they depend on Him for everything. Such is the natural belief which is inscribed in the heart. (2) *Conscience*. The contemporary opinion about the conscience is that it is an element implanted by society that needs to be destroyed. To say this is to say that we need to heartlessly kill our own soul, for the conscience is the voice of God within the heart that whispers to us what is right and wrong; what is pleasing to God, or displeasing. In these sorry times, through slavery, we've become insensitive to our conscience; we no longer hear clearly what is right or wrong. Thus our goal is to become more sensitive to our conscience. (3) *The longing for God*. This is expressed in the universal yearning for Good. It is also seen in dissatisfaction with this world. What does this dissatisfaction signify? It signifies that nothing in the created world is capable of satisfying the heart. The heart or the spirit comes from God, it seeks God, it wants to taste God, it wants to abide and live in communion with God and to rest in God. When it has attained this, it has peace; and until it has attained it, it cannot have peace.

## *The Senses*

The life of a human being is very complex, and at the same time very simple. The human being is the temple of God. By our free will we can desecrate this temple, or treasure it. The

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19th-century Russian Orthodox philosopher Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov revealed the mystery of the human temple with these words:

When the mind and heart become God's dwelling, then the soul and body also become His dwelling. But God's temple is corrupted and destroyed when the body falls into sensual lust and when the mind and heart enter into evil conversation.<sup>83</sup>

The struggle in spiritual life against the desecration of this temple is revealed in the word "sensual," which signifies the senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. A 19th-century monk from Mount Athos, Greece, Saint Nicodemus, said:

Now although the body naturally inclines to the enjoyment of the senses, nevertheless it is led, ruled, and curbed by the mind.<sup>84</sup>

And to continue the thought, a 9th-century monk of Palestine, Saint John Damascene, said:

This is the difference between a rational soul and the irrational. The irrational is led and ruled by the body and the senses, while the rational soul leads and rules the body and the senses. Your true self is not the visible body but the invisible soul.<sup>85</sup>

Knowing all this, it is clear that the bodily senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—are the doors to the soul. When used improperly, these doors actually imprison the soul. Saint Ignatius says: "The eyes of the soul are the mind."<sup>86</sup> This proves the necessity of guarding both the senses and the mind.

In our times, this truth about the unseen part of life has not only become "obsolete," but is actually hated. By hating these principles of life, the world has descended to the shallowness of sensuality, and thus the soul of modern man has been desecrated and burned to the ground. But once we understand these



Saint John Damascene

principles, we must at least build up our own soul by guarding the senses, the mind, and the heart.

When we watch evil things with our eyes, we imprint this evil on our soul; when we listen to evil music, the sounds of evil are engraved on the soul and our thoughts and imagination give us no peace. The evil then leads to evil acts of destruction. In short, we destroy our body, our soul, and our heart.

The mystic, Saint John of Kronstadt, who died in this century, had an incredible understanding of the senses and

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their effect on the soul, for he himself had attained such a height of sensitivity that, by the power of God, he knew people's hearts and even thoughts. He said the following about the impression of music on the soul:

Do not be allured by the melodious sounds of an instrument or of a voice; but by their effect upon the soul, or by the words of the song, consider what their spirit is. If the sounds produce upon your soul tranquil, chaste, holy feelings, then listen to them and feed your soul with them. But if they give rise in your soul to passions, don't listen to them, and throw aside both the flesh and the spirit of the music.<sup>87</sup>

This is the essence of the unseen war; guarding the purity of the heart. In guarding the purity of the heart, you are thereby guarding the place where God abides. The 19th-century ascetic, Theophan the Recluse, summarized this struggle in these words:

There is only one way to begin: and that is by taming the passions. These cannot be brought under control in the soul except by guarding the heart and by awareness. Therefore, when the heart is cleansed from passions, one can devote all time to prayer, and fighting against the thoughts; and then one can look towards heaven with their physical eyes or contemplate it with the spiritual eyes of the soul, praying in purity and in truth.<sup>88</sup>

### *The Passions*

Just as chains hinder a prisoner's freedom, so also the passions hinder the lover of truth from conversing with God. To speak of passions today is not an easy thing, since passion and vice has been given the name of virtue, and virtue has been given the name of vice.

The word passion comes from the Latin word *passionis*, which means suffering. In contemporary use, the word has taken on the meaning of romantic love, as *passion* also means

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an intense, overpowering emotion. Nevertheless, its true meaning is suffering. The suffering of passion is the suffering that this fallen world provides through its intense overpowering emotion for vice. In short, we suffer because of sin, and thus we are not free. In order to understand passion and dispassion, one must understand slavery and freedom, in both the seen and unseen sense. When we become a victim of passion, we become a slave of our own flesh and a slave to this world. But when we are dispassionate, there are no limits to our freedom, both in this world, and within our own heart. The spirit of God is the spirit of freedom. This is true freedom and true peace, that the world can neither give nor understand. Thus, if God is truth, then, when *you shall know the truth, the truth shall make you free.*<sup>89</sup> The answer and key to life rests in the freedom to see, know, and love God.

“What a man loves, that he certainly desires; and what he desires, that he strives to obtain,” said the 4th-century monk and mystic, Abba Evagrius. This is the first principle to be grasped if one wishes to understand and conquer the passions and vices. One can desire and love God, or one can desire and love that which fights against God. The urgency for this unseen warfare with our passions and vices is very clear, for we’ve narrowed it down to two choices: we must either choose passion or dispassion, slavery or freedom, God or this world.

There are eight principal passions, born in this order: gluttony, lust, avarice, anger, despondency, despair, vainglory, and pride. These are the basic passions that give birth to the innumerable vices and sins that rule this world. These eight passions are like links in a chain that lead to the pit of slavery. In general, each passion, when surrendered to, gives birth to the next, and so on down the chain. They are interconnected though in no fixed pattern, for every soul reacts to the passions differently.

Passion originates and finds its initial movement in a thought, and has a succession of six movements in its development, until it reaches its end result: slavery to vice. But

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before the origin of the thought of the passion, there first takes place one vital thing: weakness of faith.<sup>90</sup> After one's faith weakens, the following six states begin the process of imprisoning the soul:<sup>91</sup>

(1) *Suggestion* is a simple thought which comes to the mind from outside, that suggests the idea of vice. There are two causes for the occurrence of the initial suggestion: one being a natural cause and the other being caused by the inspiration of the evil one, and evil spirits. Suggestion takes place independently of one's free will, against one's wish, without one's participation—spontaneously—and is therefore considered innocent or dispassionate. If it is not invited consciously and voluntarily, it is not yet a vice.

(2) *Conjunction* is the most important stage because it is voluntary conversation with the evil thought, granting it permission to come within, receiving it and holding it within the mind. Attention lingers with the thought and delights in it. In order to cut off the further development of the vice, to remove it from the mind and to terminate the evil fantasy, one needs to gather one's attention by the effort of one's free will.

(3) *Joining* is the acceptance of the thought, and is thus a defeat by it. It is the absence of willful rejection of the thought, through which the will becomes increasingly attracted to the vice and its evil mental images, and gets satisfaction from it. The equilibrium of the soul is totally destroyed, and the soul surrenders to the thought and is no longer free. The vice has been committed in intention, yet it has still not become an act.

(4) *Struggle* is opposition to the vice before it becomes totally manifest as an act. In many cases this stage is absent from the progression of the passion, especially when one is used to surrendering to the evil thoughts and images, and have the habit of sin engraved into the soul.

(5) *Captivity* is passion; it is imprisonment and enslavement to the vice. It is no longer the will that rules over the evil thought, but the evil thought rules over the will, putting all its energy and attention on the passion. Thus, the passion and vice

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become the object of affection and love, and this evil love becomes habitual. The passion becomes the daily reason for existing, and love for God and mankind becomes the object of secret hatred. The prison of the vice becomes cold and dark, and the decomposition of the soul sets in.

A person must not allow this to take place, but must learn to struggle against the passions in the most difficult of warfare, that is compared to the bearing of a cross. Saint Isaac, a Syrian desert-dweller of the 7th century, said:

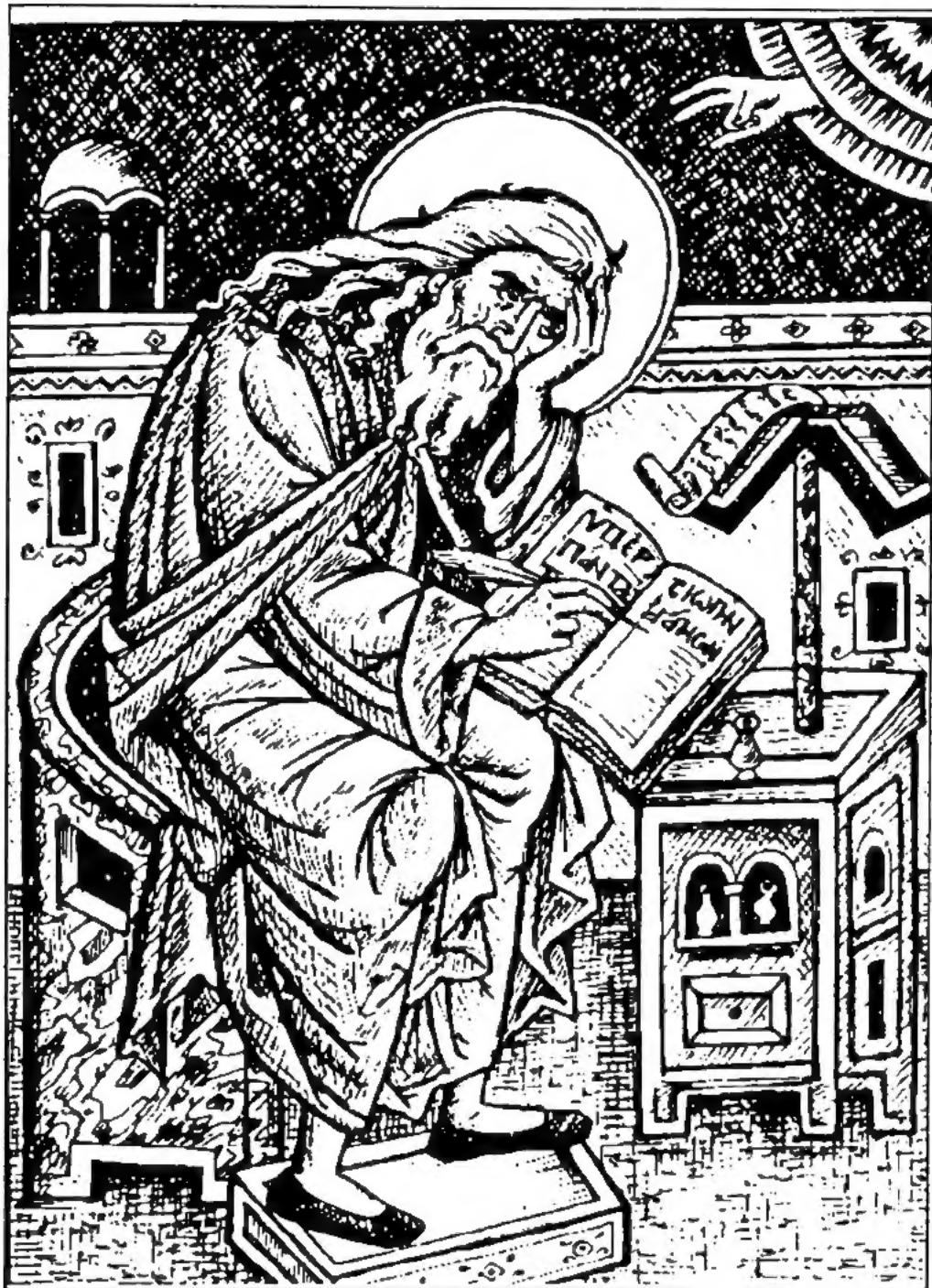
This cross-bearing is of two kinds: one consists of enduring the bodily deprivations which are inevitable in struggling with passions. The other consists in meditation on God, and abiding in prayer, and is called contemplation. The first, bodily cross-bearing, purifies the passionate part of the soul, while the second, contemplation, brings light to the soul.<sup>92</sup>

### *The Virtues*

The person enabled by grace to devote himself utterly and always to God has achieved the highest good. But on the path to this good there are the many and innumerable virtues. The greatest of these virtues were summed up in the teachings of the Apostle and disciple of Christ named Paul. Calling them the "fruits of the Spirit," he said that they are: *Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-restraint.*<sup>93</sup>

The word *virtue* comes from the Latin word *vertus* which has a twofold meaning: first, *power*, and second, its common English meaning. That is why good is always victorious over evil—because the greatest power is virtue. The 5th-century Syrian monk, Saint Isaac, said of virtue:

The fear of God is the beginning of virtue and it is said to be the offspring of faith. It is planted in the heart when a man withdraws his mind from the world's distractions so as



Saint Isaac the Syrian

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to confine its wandering thoughts within the reflections upon the world to come.

The virtues follow one another in succession, so that the path of virtue does not become grievous and burdensome, and so that being achieved in order progressively they may be made light; thus, the hardships endured for virtue's sake should be cherished by a man as is the virtue itself.<sup>94</sup>

Although there are many virtues, there are four principle virtues that are directly of the soul. An 11th-century monk of the desert in Asia Minor, Saint Peter Damascene, wrote about these four virtues:

There are four forms of the wisdom of virtue: First *moral judgment*, or the knowledge of what should and shouldn't be done, combined with the guarding of the mind; second *self-restraint*, whereby our moral purpose is protected and kept free from all acts, thoughts, and words that do not accord with God; third—*courage*, strength, and endurance of suffering, trials and temptations encountered on the spiritual path; fourth—*justice*, which consists in maintaining a proper balance between the first three.

These virtues arise from the three aspects or powers of the soul in the following manner: From the soul's mind comes the virtue of moral judgment and justice; from the soul's will-power comes self-restraint; and from the soul's heart comes courage.<sup>95</sup>

It is this courage of the heart that one needs in order to be victorious in virtue. C. S. Lewis said that without courage, no other virtue can exist except by accident. Without courage in striving for virtue one does not only deprive oneself of virtue but will inevitably be forced to embrace vice for, since virtue seems difficult to acquire, courage is of absolute necessity. The 14th century monk of Mount Athos, Greece, Gregory Palamas said concerning this:

Is good more difficult to accomplish, and virtues harder to achieve than evil things? I don't see things this way! It is a

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fact that the man who is drunk and has no self control labors harder than he who is master of himself.<sup>96</sup>

After one has begun to master oneself, then one obtains the pinnacle of virtues: the source of the power of virtue, which is love. To speak of love is to dare to speak of God; for God is love. In the words of Saint Isaac of Syria:

Now that we have written above about spiritual aspiration and longing, the time has come to explain it. It is an indistinct power which is stirred in the heart by love.

The love of God is warm by nature, and when beyond nature it descends upon a man, it throws his soul into ecstasy.

This question was asked of Monk Isaac: "What is the perfection of all the fruits of the Spirit?" Isaac answered:

When a man is deemed worthy of the perfect love of God.

This question was then asked: "And when does a man know that he has attained this?" Isaac answered:

When the remembrance of God is stirred in his mind, straightway his heart is kindled by love of Him and his eyes pour forth abundant tears. A man who is in this state will never be without tears, because that which brings him to the remembrance of God is never absent from him. Wherefore, even in sleep he converses with God. For love desires it to be this way. This is perfection...even in this life.

He who has acquired love, tastes Christ every day and every hour, and becomes immortal through it. Love is much sweeter than life. He who has acquired love becomes clothed in God Himself.<sup>97</sup>

## *Prayer*

Thus from love we are led to prayer. The great monk of Mount Athos, Saint Gregory Palamas, said the following of prayer, which reveals the depths of prayer of the heart.



Theophan the Recluse

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The virtue of prayer performs the mystery of our union with God; it is the tie of rational creatures with their Creator.

There are three degrees of prayer that are like three links in a chain. Each degree leads to the other, until the one praying reaches the desired perfection of prayer. Very few people actually endure unto perfection in prayer. In fact, in these distracting times, very few people get past the first link in the progression of prayer.

Before prayer comes faith. We must understand that prayer is a real conversation with God, where, after the heart is purified, God comes to dwell within the heart. That is why the body is called a temple, for it is the house of God. This is why Christ said, *the kingdom of God is within you.*<sup>98</sup> This is where heaven begins for those who desire heaven. Thus prayer, true prayer, demands a faith that is not of this world.

On the three degrees of prayer, Saint Theophan the Recluse says:

The first degree is bodily prayer, which consists of reading written prayers and psalms. In this there must be patience, labor, and sweat; for the attention in prayer runs away. The heart then begins to feel nothing and then loses the desire to pray. Yet, in spite of this, give yourself a prayer rule and keep to it. Such is active prayer.

The second degree is prayer with attention: the mind becomes accustomed to attention at the time of prayer, and prays consciously, without distraction. The mind is focused on the written words to the point of speaking them as if they were its own.

The third degree is prayer of feeling: the heart is warmed by concentration so that what was only thought becomes feeling. First it was a virtuous phrase being read, then it becomes virtue itself, and what was only a petition in words is changed into a feeling of entire necessity. Whoever has passed through the first degree—action; and the second degree—thought; and has come to true feeling, will pray without words, for God is God of the heart.

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Turn to God, drawing down the attention of the mind into the heart, and call upon Him there. With the mind firmly established in the heart, stand before God with awe, reverence, and devotion. If we would fulfill this small rule unfailingly, the passionate desires and feelings would never arise, nor would any other thought.<sup>99</sup>

The entire meaning of human existence is summed up in prayer. It is the beginning and the end of life and the first goal strived for every passing day in life. Theophan the Recluse says:

The principle thing in life is to stand with the mind in the heart before God, and to go on standing before Him unceasingly, day and night, until the end of life.

Prayer is the only way to perfection but prayer in this corrupt and imperfect world comes only from Pain of heart.

### *Pain of Heart*

If there is one common element that binds humanity together, it is suffering. People of all races, classes, and nations suffer. Simply, to suffer is to be human.

The tyranny of the Nihilist world causes humanity to suffer. In man's rebellion he inflicts pain upon himself, causing even more suffering. But perhaps the worst suffering is the suffering of ignorance, which causes man to follow the empty pleasures of the world. The question is: how does man escape suffering?

The answer is: man cannot escape suffering in this world. The crucified Christ teaches that man must embrace suffering and through it pass into the eternal life that is void of suffering. And this suffering must be for the truth of God. If we suffer for ourselves, we suffer in vain, but if we suffer for God we suffer for the truth.

But God is the fount of mercy, and it is by His wisdom that man cannot escape suffering in this world. Suffering is one of the greatest teachers. Monk Seraphim Rose, a man who was a

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true philosopher and knew and understood the gift of suffering, once said,

Why do men learn through pain and suffering, and not through pleasure and happiness? Very simply, because pleasure and happiness accustom one to satisfaction with the things given in this world, whereas pain and suffering drive one to seek a more profound happiness beyond the limitations of this world.

It is precisely when a person is suffering for seemingly no reason that God reveals Himself. It was for the oppressed and down-trodden that Christ came to earth. Christ came to deliver the race of mankind from spiritual bondage, to set the captives free. Suffering can be even a direct route by which God touches the heart. As one who had himself suffered intensely, Monk Seraphim Rose speaks from personal experience:

The process of revelation occurs in a very simple way: a person is in need, he suffers, and then the other world opens up. The more you are in suffering and difficulties and are desperate for God, the more He is going to come to your aid, reveal who He is, and show you the way out.

Once a person has accepted Christ in his heart, the burden of life's suffering becomes light. Suffering is then transformed into spiritual food by which virtue is gained.

The first virtue that suffering teaches is humility. Those who have suffered intensely know that human strength alone is not enough to endure the pain of life. It is only by the strength of God that they can endure it, whether it comes from an external source: sickness, bodily injury, or even torture; or from internal strife: loneliness, despair, sorrow, abandonment and grief. God teaches humanity through suffering to reveal human weakness so that we will seek the power of Christ.

The next virtue that suffering produces is patience. Through enduring the pain and trials of life strength of soul is gained. Along with longsuffering patience, comes the ability to

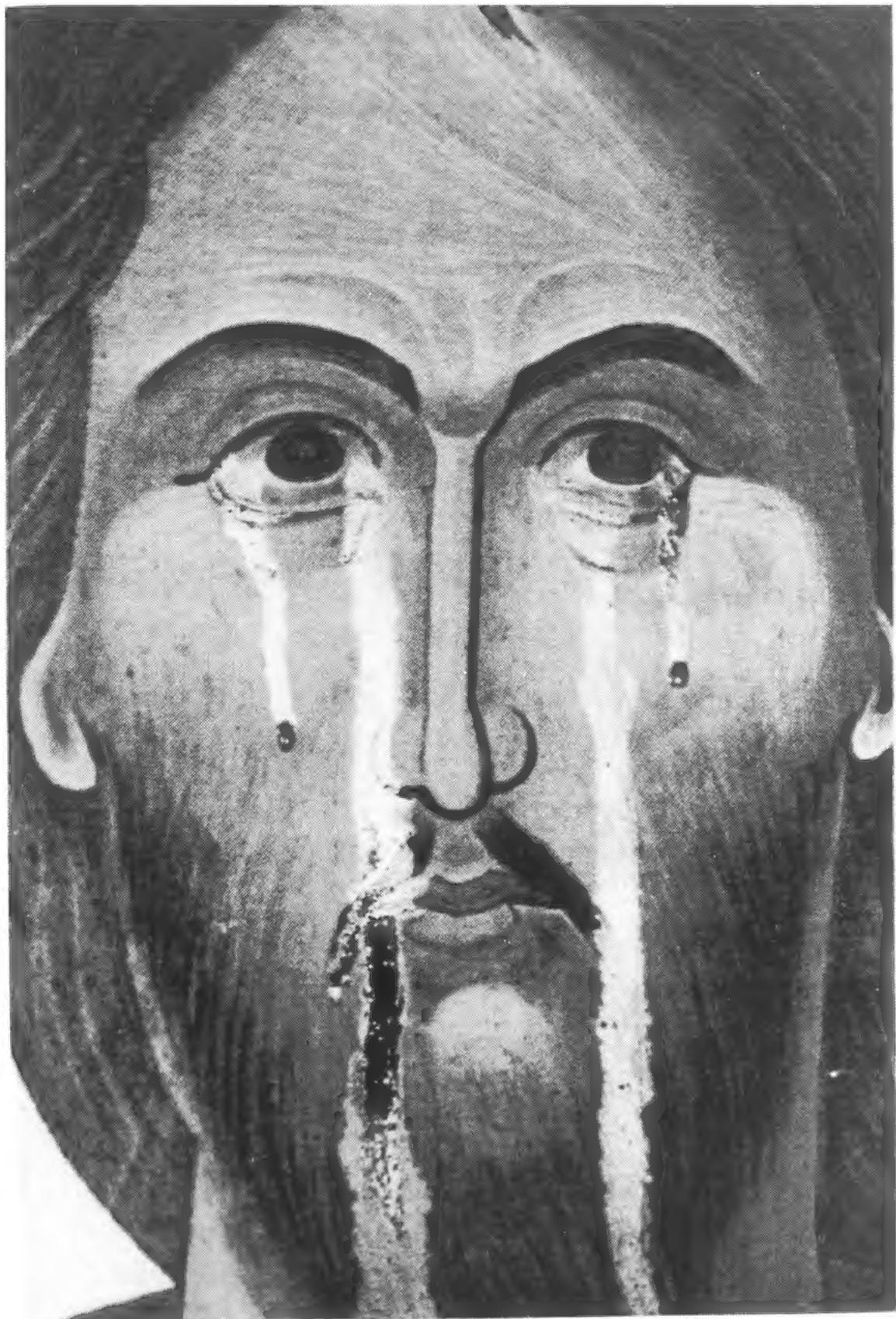
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see beyond the temporal world with its difficulties and to see the “big picture.” Wisdom tells the sufferer to look to things eternal, where there is no sickness, sorrow, or sighing. By holding eternity in the heart, the sufferer can endure temporal discomfort and feel thankful toward God for giving him the opportunity to bear a cross. Through enduring suffering with patience, the soul is tempered and man is given the chance to become real and grow in faith.

The third virtue learned through suffering is compassion. Only one who has suffered can have compassion for another who suffers. This virtue can grow to such a point that a person can literally feel another’s pain, and even the pain of all humanity, crying out in its lamentable state. Saint Isaac of Syria when speaking of compassion said:

And what is a heart of mercy? The kindling of the heart for all creation, for men, birds, animals, demons, and all creatures. In bringing them to mind, in beholding them the eyes are filled with tears out of a great and powerful compassion that embraces the heart. And the heart softens, and it cannot bear to hear or see any kind of harm, or even the least sorrow, experienced by a creature. And therefore even for those who cause one harm, it offers prayer every hour, that they may be preserved and purified. It is awakened in the heart without measure insofar as one becomes like God.

From these three virtues that are attained through “bearing the cross” of Christ, comes a state of soul called “pain of heart.” Pain of heart is a spring from which the sufferer draws, that pushes him on to endure all, to pass through death and meet the eternal realm. The foundation of pain of heart is the remembrance of death, the transitory nature of life on earth, and the suffering state of man on earth. These thoughts immediately bring the sufferer to the remembrance of God. The great monk of 4th century Palestine, Saint Mark the Ascetic, once said a simple phrase that captured in its fullness, pain of heart:



Weeping icon of Jesus Christ.

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Remembrance of God is pain of heart endured in the spirit of devotion. But he who forgets God becomes self-indulgent and thus insensitive.

It is this remembrance of God that finalizes the last true rebellion. The bearing of the cross in the spirit of devotion is the path by which the soul of man is purified and prepared to pass through bodily death into eternal life.

### *The Three Enemies*

Now after forming a world view with an understanding of the body and soul, the senses, the passions, the virtues, prayer, and suffering, the last true rebellion can be revealed in its entirety. The monk, Saint Paisius, in his writings narrowed this rebellion down to three elements: *the world, the flesh, and the devil*. It is the rebellion against these that is the last true rebellion:

*The World.* The first degree of warfare and battle is against the world. This is when we separate ourselves from it and leave its sweet pleasures and the delusive mirage of its beauties of corruptible wealth, of temporary looseness; and take up the example of the voluntary poverty of Christ. *If anyone wishes to become a friend of the world, he becomes an enemy of God.*<sup>100</sup> Therefore flee from this world to a life of stillness. Deny the world with its delusion; estrange yourself from it with an estrangement that never turns back. And thus you will have conquered the first enemy.

*The Flesh.* You will conquer the body if you restrain yourself from an excess of pleasurable food and uncontrolled drinking. Then by fasting you will slay the desire for sin and mortify the lustful desires of the flesh; laziness you will destroy with wakefulness; the desire for impure sexual relations by the self-restraint of purity. It is with these arrows that the body wages war against the soul.

Our very body is partially an enemy for us, because with its desire for sin it battles against the soul. But it is also our

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friend, in that it can assist the soul in what is good. With the body, with God's help, I can fast, pour out tears, and give alms. We cannot do these things with the naked soul.

If we look to this world below, just to the body, then man is temporary, mortal, the inheritor of fire and darkness. But if we look with the mind's eye to the world above, then we are eternal, immortal, and the heir of heavenly light. Wherefore, I beg you as servants of Christ, that you be not captives to the world below, of the body and death, but live for the world above, for immortality.

*The Devil.* If you overcome the world and the flesh, then you can easily take arms against the devil himself, against the rulers of the world, the prince of darkness. Only take up the full armor of God with the weaponry of faith, patience, and prayer. The devil and his powers are thus overcome: pride by humility, vainglory by self-denial, sex by purity; but most of all by the cross of your patience, crucifying yourself to the world and thus dying to sinful life.

Then your victory will appear like the full moon in the daytime, shining with eternal glory; the angels of God will come to meet you and Christ the eternal King of glory will receive you and glorify you, granting you a place in His heavenly kingdom.<sup>101</sup>

## *Final Word*

In this shattered world which is coming to an end, it is now so very clear. As the war of man against God continues, it has ceased with us. We are no longer children of war who cry ourselves to sleep over the death of God. We are no longer children of darkness but are the children of the light for we know our origin, we have lived through our death and have been resurrected.

We now know the difference between deformity and beauty, evil and good, hate and love—and to speak of love is to dare to speak of God for God is love. Thus, God is not dead, for who could kill love? It is this love that is worth dying for

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daily—it is God that is worthy of our ultimate sacrifice for God first died for us.

We have survived the hell of this dying world and now know that *the kingdom of Heaven is within us*. As the world continues in death, we will carry the cross of life for we see clearly the hell around us, but choose to be crucified personally—mystically; for crucifixion is the only way to resurrection.

In this resurrection Christ thrashed the gates of hell and unshackled those who were in its chains. He trampled down death by death, and gives life to those in the grave. All this with the power of God, leaving us with these simple instructions for the last true rebellion:

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.<sup>102</sup>

With these truths the youth of the apocalypse can rise above the darkness of the end and become the light of the world.

*But as for now there abides faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*